<u>**WE CLAIM:**</u>

1. A method for automatically transitioning configuration settings from a source computing system to a target computing system, comprising the steps of:

5   locating a plurality of configuration settings on a source computing system using a Personality object;

extracting the plurality of configuration settings from a plurality of locations on the source computing system;

storing the plurality of extracted configuration settings in a pre-determined

10   transition format;

manipulating the plurality of extracted configuration settings stored in the pre-determined transition format; and

preparing a transition package from the plurality of manipulated configuration settings stored in the pre-determined transition format, wherein the transition package is

15   used to transition configuration settings from the source computing system to a target computing system.

2. A computer readable medium having stored therein instructions for causing a central processing unit to execute the method of Claim 1.

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4.   The method of Claim 1 further comprising:

transferring the transition package to a target computing system; and

infusing the transition package on the target computing system to transition

configuration settings from the source computing system to the target computing system.

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5.   The method of Claim 4 further comprising:

optionally verifying that the configuration settings in the transition package has

been correctly applied to the target computing system.

10   6.   The method of Claim 1 wherein the step of extracting the plurality of

configuration settings includes extracting the plurality of configuration settings using an

extraction plan.

7.   The method of Claim 6 wherein the extraction plan includes a full list of

15   configuration settings available on the source computing system, an exclusion list, to

exclude one or more configuration settings from the full list, and an inclusion list, to

include only selected ones of the configuration settings from the full list.

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8. The method of Claim 1 wherein the step of storing the plurality of extracted configuration settings in a pre-determined transition format includes storing the plurality of configuration settings in a pre-determined transition format suitable for a database on the source computing system.

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9. The method of Claim 1 wherein the step of storing the plurality of extracted configuration settings in a pre-determined transition format includes storing the extracted configuration settings in a pre-determined transition format in any of a volatile or non-volatile storage on the source computing system.

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10. The method of Claim 1 wherein the step of manipulating the plurality of extracted configuration settings stored in the pre-determined transition format includes transitioning a first configuration setting in a first format used on the source computing system into a second configuration setting in a second format used on the target

15   computing system.

11. The method of Claim 1 wherein the step of manipulating the plurality of extracted configuration settings stored in the pre-determined transition format includes removing one or more of the extracted configuration settings.

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12. The method of Claim 11 wherein the one or more of the extracted configuration settings are removed based on a transition plan.

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13. The method of Claim 12 wherein the transition plan includes a full list of configuration settings extracted from the source computing system, an exclusion list, to exclude one or more configuration settings from the full list, and an inclusion list, to include only selected ones of the configuration settings from the full list.

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14. The method of Claim 1 wherein the step of preparing a transition package from plurality of extracted configuration settings includes preparing a list of commands along with the plurality of manipulated configuration settings and related data for the target computing system.

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15. The method of Claim 1 wherein the Personality object includes a computer readable medium having stored therein a plurality of object-oriented data structures for locating configuration settings on the source computing system, the computer readable medium comprising:

15   a Desktop object-oriented object for storing information about configuration settings associated with a windowed graphical user interface;

a Network object-oriented object for storing information about configuration settings associated with a computer network;

an Internet object-oriented object for storing information about configuration

20   settings associated with the Internet;

a Mail object-oriented object for information about configurations settings associated with electronic mail; and

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an Application object-oriented object for information about configuration settings associated with software applications.

16. The method of Claim 1 wherein the step of locating a plurality of configuration settings includes locating a plurality of configuration settings with an Extraction application.

17. The method of Claim 1 wherein the wherein the step of extraction a plurality of configuration settings includes extraction a plurality of configuration settings with an Extraction application using an extraction plan.

18. The method of Claim 1 wherein the step of manipulating the plurality of extracted configuration settings includes manipulating the plurality of extracted configuration settings with a Preparation application using a transition plan.

19. The method of Claim 1 wherein the step of preparing a transition package from the plurality of manipulated configuration settings includes preparing a transition package with a Preparation application, wherein the transition package is included within an Injection application prepared by the Preparation application.

20. A method for automatically applying transition configuration settings, comprising the following steps:

receiving a transition package on a target computing system from a source computing system, wherein the transition package includes a plurality of manipulated

5   configuration settings from the source computing system and wherein the transition package is used to transition manipulated configuration settings from the source computing system to the target computing system;

infusing the transition package on the target computing system to automatically transition configuration settings from the source computing system to the target

10   computing system; and

optionally verifying configuration settings from the source computing system on the target computing system to ensure that the transition package has been correctly applied to the target computing system.

15   21. A computer readable medium having stored therein instructions for causing a central processing unit to execute the method of Claim 20.

22. The method of Claim 20 wherein the step of receiving a transition package on a target computing system includes receiving an Injection application including the

20   transition package.

23. The method of Claim 20 wherein the step of infusing the transition package on the target computing system includes infusing the transition package with an Injection application, wherein the Injection application includes the transition package.

5   24. The method of Claim 20 wherein the step of optionally verifying configuration settings includes optionally verifying configuration settings with an Injection application.

25. A computer readable medium having stored therein a plurality of object-
10   oriented data structures for a Personality object for locating configuration settings on a source computing system, the computer readable medium comprising:

a Desktop object-oriented object for storing information about configuration settings associated with a windowed graphical user interface;

a Network object-oriented object for storing information about configuration
15   settings associated with a computer network;

an Internet object-oriented object for storing information about configuration settings associated with the Internet;

a Mail object-oriented object for storing information about configurations settings associated with electronic mail; and

20   an Application object-oriented object for storing information about configuration settings associated with software applications.

26. An automatic transition system, the system comprising in combination:

a user interface application for preparing an extraction plan and a transition plan to extract and transition configuration settings from a source computing system to a target computing system;

5 an extraction application for locating and extracting configuration settings on a source computing system to transition to a target computing system, wherein the extraction application uses a Personality object to locate, and an extraction plan to extract configuration settings on the source computing system;

a preparation application for manipulating configuration settings extracted 10 from a source computing system and for preparing a transition package using a transition plan, wherein the transition package includes a plurality of manipulated configuration settings from the source computing system and wherein the transition package is used to transition configuration settings from the source computing system to a target computing system;

15 an injection application for infusing manipulated configuration settings from a transition package to transition configuration settings from a source computing system to a target computing system; and

a database for storing configuration settings extracted from a source computing system, manipulated configuration settings from a source computing system, 20 and transition packages to transition configuration settings from a source computing system to a target computing system.

27. A method for automatically transitioning configuration settings from a source computing system to a target computing system, comprising the steps of:

locating a plurality of configuration settings on one or more source computing

5   systems;

extracting selected ones of the plurality of configuration settings from a plurality of locations on the plurality of source computing systems; and

creating a plurality of transitions packages from the selected ones of the plurality of extracted configuration settings.

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28. A computer readable medium having stored therein instructions for causing a central processing unit to execute the method of Claim 27.

29. The method of Claim 27 further comprising:

15   infusing the one or more transition packages on one or more target computing systems to automatically transition configuration settings from the one or more source computing systems to the one or more target computing systems.

30. The method of Claim 29 wherein the step of infusing the one or more

20   transition packages includes infusing the one or more transition packages on the one or more target computing systems from one or more intermediate computing systems.

31. The method of Claim 27 wherein the step of creating a plurality of transitions packages from the selected ones of the plurality of extracted configuration settings includes creating a plurality of transitions packages from the selected ones of the plurality of extracted configuration settings on one or more intermediate computing systems.

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32. The method of Claim 27 wherein the step of sending the plurality of transitions packages to one or more target computing systems includes sending the plurality of transitions packages to one or more target computing system using one or more intermediate computing systems.

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33. A method for automatically transitioning configuration settings from a source computing system to a target computing system, comprising the steps of:

preparing an extraction plan and a transition plan with a User Interface application;

15   locating a plurality of configuration settings on a source computing system with an Extraction application using a Personality object;

extracting the plurality of configuration settings from a plurality of locations on the source computing system with the Extraction application and the extraction plan;

storing the plurality of extracted configuration settings in a database format on the

20   source computing system;

manipulating the plurality of extracted configuration settings stored in the database format with a Preparation application and the transition plan;

preparing a transition package from the plurality of manipulated configuration settings stored in the database format with the Preparation application, wherein the transition package is used to transition configuration settings from the source computing system to a target computing system;

5   preparing an Injection application including the transition package with the Preparation application, wherein the Injection application uses the transition package to transition configuration settings from the source computing system to the target computing system; and

sending the Injection application including the transition package from the source

10   computing system to the target computing system.

34. A computer readable medium having stored therein instructions for causing a central processing unit to execute the method of Claim 33.

15   35. The method of Claim 33 further comprising:

receiving the Injection application including the transition package on the target computing system from the source computing system;

infusing the transition package with the Injection application on the target computing system to transition configuration settings from the source computing system

20   to the target computing system; and

optionally verifying configuration settings from the transition package with the

Injection application to ensure that the transition package has been correctly applied to

the target computing system.

5   36. The method of Claim 33 wherein the Personality object includes a computer

readable medium having stored therein a plurality of object-oriented data structures for

locating configuration settings on the source computing system, the computer readable

medium comprising:

        a Desktop object-oriented object for storing information about configuration

10   settings associated with a windowed graphical user interface;

        a Network object-oriented object for storing information about of configuration

settings associated with a computer network;

        an Internet object-oriented object for storing information about of configuration

settings associated with the Internet;

15   a Mail object-oriented object for storing information about configurations settings

associated with electronic mail; and

        an Application object-oriented object for storing information about configuration

settings associated with software applications.